

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGRE-00
/079 W

----- 128408 /63

R 141310Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8673
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
DAR ES SALAAM 0186
AMCONSUL DOUALA
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, EGEN, GB
SUBJ: AFRICAN WOOD ORGANIZATION

REF: LIBREVILLE 1074

SUMMARY: ORGANISATION AFRICAINE DU BOIS (OAB) CONCLUDED
FOURTH MINISTERIAL SESSION DECEMBER 11 WITH ACCESSION OF
ZAIRE AND WITH AGREEMENT ON PROVISIONAL BUDGET AND ON INITIAL
TASKS FOR SECRETARIAT, BUT EVIDENTLY STILL HAS LONG WAY TO GO
BEFORE BECOMING EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING BODY. END SUMMARY.

1. FOURTH MINISTERIAL MEETING OF OAB CONVENED IN LIBRE-
VILLE DECEMBER 6-11 IN KEEPING WITH SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED
AT PREVIOUS SESSION HELD HERE IN JUNE (REFTEL). ELEVEN OF
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FOURTEEN COUNTRIES PRESENT IN JUNE ALSO ATTENDED THIS

LATEST SESSION (ALL BUT ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, AND STP), AND WERE JOINED BY ZAIRE AS BOTH ATTENDEE AND SIGNATORY OF OAB STATUTES.

2. IN INTERIM BETWEEN MEETINGS, SECRETARIAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TASK OF PREPARING PROPOSALS ON BUDGET, WORK PROGRAM, PERSONNEL REGULATIONS, AND INTERNAL PROCEDURES. ACCORDING TO FINAL COMMUNIQUE AND SPEECHES, ALL BUT BUDGET WERE APPROVED. SECRETARIAT WAS AUTHORIZED PROCEED WITH RECRUITMENT OF NECESSARY PERSONNEL AND WAS ALLOCATED PROVISIONAL BUDGET TO COVER INITIAL EXPENDITURES, BUT OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL WAS REJECTED ON GROUNDS OF INADEQUATE DOCUMENTATION. INITIAL WORK PROGRAM, AS APPROVED BY MINISTERS, WILL COMPRISE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS IN VARIOUS MEMBER STATES CONCERNING EXPLOITATION AND MANAGEMENT OF FOREST RESOURCES; STUDY OF EXISTING WOOD INDUSTRIES, MARKET POTENTIAL, PRICES, AND FREIGHT RATES; AND COMPILATION OF AVAILABLE STUDIES ON UNDERUTILIZED SPECIES.

3. CONFEREES DECIDED TO HOLD NEXT MINISTERIAL MEETING IN KINSHASA DURING THIRD QUARTER OF 1977.

4. COMMENT: ZAIRE ACCESSION BRINGS MEMBERSHIP OF OAB TO FIFTEEN, THOUGH NON-ATTENDANCE OF THREE "FOUNDING MEMBERS" CASTS DOUBT ON FIRMNESS OF THEIR ADHERENCE TO ORGANIZATION. STP IS NOT EXPORTER OF WOOD IN ANY EVENT, BUT PRESENCE OF ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE AT JUNE SESSION WAS SUBJECT OF PARTICULAR LOCAL REJOICING SO THAT THEIR LOSS OF INTEREST WOULD BE A REAL BLOW TO GOG ASPIRATIONS FOR OAB FUTURE.

5. OAB APPEARS TO BE HAVING USUAL ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING ITSELF ORGANIZED, BUT DELEGATES PRESENT LIBREVILLE EVIDENTLY PUSHED SECRETARIAT HARD FOR MORE RAPID PROGRESS. DESPITE THEIR URGINGS, HOWEVER, OAB IS PROBABLY LONG WAY FROM BECOMING EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING BODY, EVEN WITHIN LIMITED MANDATE ENVISAGES BY ITS FOUNDERS. STEIGMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WOOD PRODUCTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LIBREV02645
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760460-1305
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761245/aaaabmsz.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LIBREVILLE 1074
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AFRICAN WOOD ORGANIZATION
TAGS: EAGR, EGEN, GB, CG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006